



Rhode Island
Economic Development Corporation

**Small Business Advocacy Council
Tuesday, December 4, 2012
8:30 – 10:00AM**

**RI Economic Development Corporation
Narragansett Conference Room
315 Iron Horse Way, Providence, RI**

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Secretary of State Ralph Mollis
Jennifer Wood
Paul McGreevy
Bill Parsons
State Senator Joshua Miller
Peter Marino
Armeather Gibbs
Leslie Taito
Stephen Boyle
Jerri Moon Cantone
Janet Raymond
Bill Vernon
Mark Deion
David Lucier
Ed Ladouceur
Ken Block
Don Nokes
Bill McCourt
Jr. Neville Songwe
Ron Caniglia
Ray Fogarty
Carmen Diaz Jusino
John Gregory
Nicole Girard
Sherri Carrera
Marie Ganim
Claudia Cardozo
Robert Catanzaro
Sue Chomka
Norm Deragon
Herb Weiss
Rebecca Webber
Julie Zito
Alexander Ambrosius

Vlad Ibarra
Maria Tocco
Kelly Carello
Maureen Ewing
Graham Sheridan

I. Opening Remarks

Lieutenant Governor Roberts / Secretary of State Mollis.

Jennifer Wood, Chief of Staff to the Lieutenant Governor informed the membership that Lieutenant Governor Roberts was unable to attend the meeting due to an out of state scheduling conflict. Because the last meeting was cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy and in an effort to provide some of the resources available to small business owners we invited members from the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency to provide an overview of the new Rhode Island Business Emergency Operations Center and how you can participate. Ms. Wood went on to say we had a packed agenda with two presentations by Office of Management and Budget and the Economic Development Corporation as well as three subcommittee report updates.

Secretary of State Mollis wanted to continue improving the “We Mean Business Expo” now in its sixth reiteration, enhance collaborations and provide greater opportunities for small business entrepreneurs. With new technologies being developed and online services being offered he requested more input to reinvent the Expo, and help it become a greater resource. He urged attendees to write their ideas and suggestions to Kelly Carello, Director of the First Stop Business Information Center at kcarello@sos.ri.gov or 401.222.3040.

Ms. Wood made a motion to approve the minutes which was seconded and unanimously approved.

1. OMB Presentation

Peter Marino / Leslie Taito

Ms. Wood introduced Peter Marino who will be the first Director of the newly created Rhode Island Office of Management and Budget. Mr. Marino previously served as the Rhode Island Senate Fiscal Advisor. In that role, he was responsible for the staffing, supervision, and overall operation of the Senate Fiscal Advisory Office, which assists Senate leadership in negotiating and developing the state's annual operating and capital budget. Mr. Marino holds a Masters in Public Administration from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and a Bachelor's in Science from James Madison University.

Mr. Marino attributed the leadership of Governor Lincoln Chafee for creating the Office of Management and Budget. He said that the office had a different vision of enhancing state budget and financial practices including oversight of the governor's budget plan, monitoring program and service delivery by state agencies, re-directing the remaining federal stimulus funds, managing grants and making it easier to do business through regulatory reform. Some of his short term goals are within the first six to eight weeks create a new sense of fiscal discipline and critical thinking about putting people back to work, investment in workforce development and higher education. The goal of the office's strategic long-term planning is to establish a comprehensive public finance and management system for Rhode Island that manages data driven budget process, monitors state agencies performance, and ensures accountability and transparency to Rhode Island citizens.

Leslie Taito discussed regulatory reform in two phases. The first phase will involve the regulatory review of all state agencies and departments required to evaluate all existing regulations for harmful impacts on small businesses. The law requires each agency to review 25 percent of its regulations per year for four years. Ms. Taito explained that until the target is met state entities are not allowed to file any new regulations and once the initial set of evaluations is completed; entities have another 120 days to evaluate the next 25 percent until all regulations have been considered. She reported that the Office of the Secretary of State has already completed the first phase.

The second phase will involve E-permitting statewide creating a clear, predictable and reliable system. This statewide permitting is being worked in conjunction with the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the State Building Code Commissioner while looking at best practice states such as Utah and Minnesota. The system will permit municipalities and customers to interface in a more friendly business manner while enhancing the regulatory system by providing information on important changes including the tracking of permitting throughout the process.

2. **RI EDC Update**

Paul McGreevy

Ms. Wood introduced Paul McGreevy who continues to oversee the day-to-day operations at the RI Economic Development Corporation until Bill Parsons goes before the Senate for confirmation as Executive Director.

Mr. McGreevy served in the U.S. Navy from 1982-1995, reaching the rank of Lieutenant Commander. During his time in the Navy, he served as a Surface Warfare Officer; worked on a NATO staff coordinating logistics planning for peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia; was the Material and Logistics Officer on a destroyer squadron staff; and served as Chief Engineer on a Navy frigate. After the Navy, McGreevy spent over fourteen years as a senior management and IT consultant with KPMG LLP, BearingPoint Inc., and Deloitte Consulting LLP, where he specialized in business strategic planning, organizational development, and technology architecture for federal agencies. More recently, McGreevy led the RI Department of Business Regulations.

Mr. McGreevy provided an overview of the goals of the RI EDC which included, an internal focus on how do they make their activities work better while improving processes. Cost control on allocation of monies, programming and improving staffing skills; technology investment to ensure systems work well and a greater emphasis on customer service and enhancing partnerships with state agencies. These partnerships included meetings with the RI Department of Labor and Training on workforce development issues as well as the RI Department of Environmental Management and the RI Department of Transportation on storm recovery efforts. There will be monthly outreach to communities to build on community assets and provide services on cross training of different sectors and employees.

3. **RI Business Emergency Operations Center Presentation** *Alex Ambrosius/Julie Zito RIEMA*

The Rhode Island Business Emergency Operations Center (RIBEOC) is a joint effort between the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) and the US Economic Development Agency (EDA) to form a partnership with the private sector.

Alex Ambrosius explained how their mission is to establish a partnership between RIEMA and the local businesses throughout Rhode Island by: providing training, situational awareness, business continuity planning, coordinating emergency resources, and forming and maintaining an emergency communications system in order to achieve private-sector awareness and information preparedness

Julie Zito went on to explain how the RIBEOC will work with businesses to improve their disaster preparedness; improve communication with business and industry before, during and after disaster events; rapidly develop sound economic-impact estimates to support decision making and requests for business assistance; coordinate response efforts to assist businesses in their efforts to return to normal operations as quickly as possible; and help coordinate post disaster economic recovery.

4. **Sub-committee updates**

Subcommittee Chairs

Regulations Co-chair Leslie Taito / Gary Ezovski:

Gary Ezovski was unable to attend the meeting as he was nominated as the Rhode Island representative to Region I at the Small Business Administration Regulatory Fairness Board Roundtable in New Hampshire.

Ms. Taito continued discussing a broader process for municipalities with E-permitting and meetings held with the Fire Review Board.

Legislation Co-chair Senator Joshua Miller / Mark Hayward

State Senator Joshua Miller stated that most of the legislative gains were made in the regulatory front. He pointed to the physical alterations permit, the removal of duplicative language, web-based permitting and changes to the state fire code as great strides.

The Senator stated that the Senate would be looking to make recommendations on how to improve Rhode Island business rankings and workforce development issues as well as at the national level on what to do to get reform acknowledged.

Resources & Retention Co-chairs John Gregory / Stephen Boyle

Stephen Boyle stated that the subcommittee came up with three recommendations:

First, the workgroup members agreed that there is a need to have a centralized website/location for business owners to turn to. As previously discussed, EDC had a tremendous resource ("Every Company Counts" website) that should be utilized in some form going forward. Additional considerations include the need to staff the site as for example the SBA has a Community Calendar that should be used as a model of inter-agency collaboration.

Second was a question about workforce issues and training our current workforce to be able to be competitive in a global economy. Lastly, the members felt that there was a need for Rhode Island to have a strategic message about what resources are available to small business owners as part of a broader effort.

5. Next steps

Ms. Wood indicated that the subcommittees will continue to meet to prepare for the upcoming legislative session. These are the 2013 tentative meetings:

January 29

May 7

September 17

December 3

All meetings will be held at the RI EDC at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.